



LAUREA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Attitudes towards the Sexuality of Finnish Teenagers

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2011, Otaniemi

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ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE SEXUALITY OF FINNISH TEENAGERS

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Degree program in Social Studies
Bachelor Thesis
September, 2011
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Abstract

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The aim of this project based theses was to describe 'Attitudes towards the Sexuality of Finnish Teenagers'. The primary target was to gather the knowledge the teenagers know about their sexuality and how they feel. The secondary target was to describe the attitudes other minorities have towards their sexuality. There was an introduction session on the entire topic about reproductive health issues, sexuality, attitudes and rights. In order to get both targets of this project to be successful, one-on-one questionnaire was administered to 24 pupils aged 15 years (6 males and 18 females) and a group discussion was undertaken as well for students to discuss a broader perspective of the entire issue.

This research was based on intensive search on existing literature on Anti-oppressive Practices, Adolescent and Reproductive health, Sexuality and Attitudes. After the one-on-one questionnaire and group discussions were held, it was discovered that the teenagers have knowledge of the issues, were already confident and empowered. They had concerns about issues on sex, feelings, responsibilities and reactions of other people from different multicultural backgrounds or the minority.

Feedback was collected from the teenagers at every interaction held with them from the introductory sessions, the questionnaire administered, the group discussion held and a final forum where questions and answers came up. Feedback was also taken from the supervisor in the Secondary school who was as well the tutor of the student on the study throughout the entire theses phases.

Qualitative research was used for this project and the Thematic content analysis, SMART & SWOT analysis was used to gather the themes in the study taken. The outcome of the thesis was that, pupils had experience negative attitudes from other multicultural groups on their sexuality. The purpose and aim of this study was not fully achieved since the minority group could not be interviewed and a forum for both cultural groups could not be created. It is recommended a further study be conducted on a minority group to compare both reports to make the study more authentic and reliable.

Key words: Sexuality, Attitudes, Adolescents, Empowerment

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1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Sex Education & Attitudes in Finland

Sex education and attitudes towards sexuality is one vital issue which is quite sensitive to talk about in the society as a whole irrespective of location. Discussing such issues amongst teenagers is also vital since they are in a sensitive age group which makes them vulnerable to any related issue.

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) did an estimate of the Nordic sex education, which represents an advance model of a comprehensive sex education in Europe. It was noticed that, Finland has been the only Nordic country where sex education has been effectively implemented. This was followed up by two national surveys, which were conducted in 1996 and 2006 on biology, and health education from teachers and a measurement was as well given on the adolescent sexual knowledge in national sexual health, knowledge quizzes. In 2006, sex education survey to teachers covered 518 schools and in 1996, it covered 421 schools. In the year 2000, it was estimated that 30241 students from 401 schools participated in the sexual health knowledge quiz and in 2006 out of 462 schools, 33819 students participated in a similar quiz.

The educational objective has been on the teachers responses to educate students to be responsible in their sexual lifestyles and to provide them with the correct facts. It is interested to notice that among boy's sex education had of a much more important role in relation to their knowledge than among girls. In the aspect of the girl's success in school was more important of the higher-level in academics. According to Kontula.O (2008) teachers were able to teach students in a more natural way using their personal life stories, using drama and role play and as well as involving students in discussions. This method positively raised student's level of knowledge in sex education.

It is recorded in Finland that, there is a positive attitude towards sexual behaviours and it's seen as a health promoter rather than a threat to health. 88 percent of Finnish men and 79 percent of Finnish women as in a study in 1992 signified that both genders thought sexual activity promotes health and well-being. It was as well studied from Kontula's report that 74 percent of men and 70 percent of women, believed that masturbation does not endanger one's health.

Sex is normally seen as an important role in a stable relationship. In 1992, a higher percentage of Finns thus 86 percent of men and 78 percent of women, considered sexual life very important since it has measures of generating happiness. However, the strength of this opinion has changed over the years and have declined from 1971 to 1992. It is recorded that, in 1971, 40 % of women aged 18 to 53 years held the opinion that sex is very important for happiness in relationships, however in 1992, only 21 % held the same view. This signifies a development that reflects the strong public obsession with sexual liberation over the past years.

Since history and in the current generation, traditional gender roles still include some double moralistic traits. Women are expected to be much more restricted in their sexual lifestyles than men are. These expectations are streamlined by referring to gender differences in sexual needs. In 1992, 51 percent of Finnish men and 61 percent of women thought that a grown-up man has a clearly or somewhat stronger sexual need than a woman does. However, 41 percent of men and 33 percent of women considered the sexual needs of men and women as equally strong. Only 7 percent believed that the sexual needs of women are stronger.

In issues of infidelity in marriages, a double moral standard is not very strong. In 1971, 34 percent of men and 29 percent of women ages from the ages of 18 to 54 said that a husband's temporary infidelity could be accepted whereas 28 percent of men and 30 percent of women would accept a wife's temporary infidelity. In 1992, the corresponding liberal attitudes in regard to a husband's infidelity were 19 percent of men and 21 percent of women, and to a wife's infidelity by 22 percent and 23 percent, respectively. Although attitudes toward different aspects of sexuality, for example, adolescent and homosexual sex, has liberalized with time, attitudes toward marital unfaithfulness have become more old fashioned in the last twenty years. This may be due to the fear of sexual infections such as AID. It is easier to be liberal in issues not directly tied to one's own life than in matters related to the personal relationship. (Kontula 2008)

There are a few tables below showing the data collected on what adolescents and adults think of sexual intercourse in a regular relationship and their thoughts about casual sex.

a- Table

1

Think That Adolescents' Sexual Intercourse Is Acceptable in a Regular Relationship (in Percentages), 1971 and 1992

Age	Men 1971	Men 1992	Women 1971	Women 1992
18-24	75	91	59	91
25-34	64	94	40	93
35-44	52	88	20	86
45-54	38	80	14	71
55-64		72		49
65-74		56		43

1971: $N = 2,139$, with 738 men and 1,401 women

1992: $N = 2,244$, with 1,101 men and 1,143 women

b- Table

2

Think That an Entirely Casual Sexual Relationship Can Be Happy and Satisfying (in Percentages), 1971 and 1992

Age	Men 1971	Men 1992	Women 1971	Women 1992
18-24	77	74	52	73
25-34	66	82	44	73
35-44	50	73	35	63
45-54	51	68	24	56
55-64		65		34
65-74		48		35

1971: $N = 2,132$, with 741 men and 1,391 women

1992: $N = 2,239$, with 1,101 men and 1,138 women

The age of sexual initiation has clearly fallen during the past few decades. Both first kisses and dating relationships are experienced at a younger age today than in the past. According to Kontula (2008) Four out of five have kissed before the age of 16, and two out of three have been going steady under the age of 18. One can say that, in this current generation norms on sexual lifestyles have changed, adolescents do initiate early sexual live styles, and that could be to the fact that the society is much freer. The reverse is true for those who have less self-confidence and fewer sexual experiences. The acquired values and moral codes, such as associating love with family, lose their importance after sexual initiation. It can be said that the values associated with starting a sexual life early are today often connected with symbolic opposition or rebellion to authorities and elders. Extended education with its upper-class values is ideal for arousing such opposition.

In d media, marketing strategies etc sex is used to sell things and ideas to the young, but sex itself is rarely sold to them. Society and parents rarely provide adolescents with interpretations of sex (scripts) that would give a positive and an enjoyable picture of sexuality. Thus, adolescents, girls in particular, do not expect much good of their first sexual experiences, especially of sexual intercourse. Normally, organized education and instruction only provide warnings about the risks of getting pregnant, being infected with an STD or the HIV virus, getting a bad reputation, and similar dangers.

Moral values relating to reproduction and marriage have been replaced gradually by values of satisfying one's social needs. This shift has contributed to a widening of interpretations relating to sexual interactions guided by strict Christian and conventional scripts towards "games," in which various tactics to achieve first sexual experiences are possible. The morals of satisfying social needs, which emphasize the importance of sexual life, gives young people permission to initiate a sexual life in various practical situations. This widening of the sexual script towards "games" is one important reason for an earlier sexual initiation among Finnish adolescents during the last few decades (Kontula 1991). Tactics, interpretations, and values, which are all part of sexual interactions, are, however, still strongly regulated socially and culturally. (Osma K. & Elina H,2007)

1.2 Reproductive health education

The stage of an adolescent is one of the interesting but challenging periods in the development of girls and boys. During this period, they are faced with all kinds of emotional, physical, psychological, environmental and other related developmental changes, which get them more confuse, worried or disturbed. Boys are pressured to identify themselves according to their biological sex already in early childhood, whereas girls are expected to behave according to their sex in their adolescence. (Sprinthall & Collins, 1995). The English terms sex and gender are synonyms in most cases, but they put the emphasis on different aspects. In Lear's (1997) opinion, sex refers to the biological state of being male or female or to sexual acts and gender; describes socially constructed masculine or feminine role behaviour.

At that stage of their lives, some of the new developmental changes include, facial and pubic hairs, menstruation, feelings of getting into a relationship, wanting to be like someone else and a haste of being independent. The most challenging part is when they feel the need or pressure to be in a sexual or casual relationship with the opposite sex. The most ordinary form of sexuality is heterosexuality. It means cognitive, emotional and sexual attraction towards the opposite. (Palo & Palo, 1999, Mooney, Knox & Schacht, 1997). During these stages in the lives of adolescents, parents, teachers, elder siblings and other supporting bodies around them need to guide them with the appropriate information, assist them in their difficulties and help them in the decisions they take. When they get very well informed of the changes in their lives, they are able to make well and informed choices thereby leading to a healthy and positive lifestyle.

1.3 Attitudes

In a society where individuals come from a diverse cultural background, raises different issues, perceptions and attitudes when it comes to their sexual lifestyles or of the other. Every attitude has a source that can be very detailed and concrete or abstract. Augoustinos and Walker (1995) consider attitudes as individual's assessments towards a specific issue of object. Many often, what is seen from the outside may not send the same message or clear or right message of what it is supposed to mean and others either misses out the right meaning or misinterpret it. Misinterpreting the sexual lifestyle of any cultural group is not exciting and sensitive since no one want to be labelled or tag inappropriately. Unfortunately, when some of these things happens, there is the tendency of that group living up to be what other

individuals or the society think of them because they end up accepting those wrong ideologies, myths and therefore get stigmatized with it.

The attitudes about sex and sexuality have changed dramatically during the lifetimes of the last two generations. Sex is no more a physical act and intercourse between two people but it has slightly been made a common frame along with sexuality. Due to this change, the meaning of sex and sexuality have become less a less denied and less frightened subject to discuss. Sex and sexuality carry the elements of individual expectations, needs, desires, dreams and the abilities and resources to achieve personal hopes. (Haavio-M, 2001)

In Wahlström's (1996) opinion, a certain attitude is created when the phenomenon is met. Attitudes are emotional-based knowledge, in which both the cognitive and emotional aspects are combined. Attitudes include acceptance or abandonment, commitment or emotional independence. Adolescents do experience major developmental changes from childhood into adulthood such as biological and psychological changes. They experience sexual growth or development, which has significant effects on the body, image, self-esteem, moods, and relationships with parents, and members of the opposite sex. Some of these effects are only hormonal, but some have personal and social effects due to the physical changes and their timing. On the contrary, to the assumptions of most people, most adolescents survive the transition period without major turmoil. (Atkinson, Atkinson, Smith, Bern & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1996).

1.4 Anti-oppressive practice

Dominelli (1998) describes anti-oppressive social work as a process or kind of social work practice, which addresses social divisions and structural inequalities in the work that is done with 'clients' (users) or workers. Anti-oppressive practice aims at providing the appropriate and sensitive services by attending to the needs of individuals regardless of their social status. Anti-oppressive practice embodies a person-centered philosophy, an egalitarian value system concerned with reducing the deleterious effects of structural inequalities upon people's lives; a methodology focusing on both process and outcome; and a way of structuring relationships between individuals that aims to empower users by reducing the negative effects of hierarchy in their immediate interaction and the work they do together.

Anti-oppressive practice (AOP) is a concept surrounding the issues of struggle for control or power, which is traced in the values of equality and social justice. These values are supported by the belief in human rights and advocates where the oppressed are assisted to make free and guided choices or decisions about their lives in whatever society they find themselves in.

If social workers have to be engaged with clients to empower them in their everyday welfare services then there is the need for them to be aware with all the vital issues surrounding anti oppressive principles. (Barnard A. Horner: 2008). These services users can include children, the youth, the marginalised group, the minority etc.

It is important teenagers in their peak period are given different opportunities and measures in allowing them to gain easy access to information surrounding their development and not feel oppressed mentally. The initiative of Finland education in sexual issues gives young people in the society enough access to these issues.

1.4.1 Empowerment

'Anti-oppressive practice is 'about a process of change which leads (service users) from feeling powerless to powerful'. (Dalrymple and Burke, 1995). Oppression is experienced normally in the lives of individuals or group of people who are marginalized in the society. Social workers stand in the position of being the mouthpiece or mediums that can change situations in the lives of the oppressed group. Social work practitioners are embedded with moral, ethical and legal duties to address and make all possible attempts in changing inequalities and disadvantage situations or environments surrounding the oppressed. For social work practitioners to be able to assist clients to be empowered and change situations around their own lives, there is the need for the social work practitioners to be informed with a multidiscipline theoretical framework, which includes disciplines of sociology , psychology, history, philosophy and politics. When these theories are included in anti-oppressive principles, it informs social work practitioners to be well knowledgeable and respond to the difficult or challenging situations the marginalized group faces. Some of the situations that causes people to be under oppressed situations includes, class, race, gender, disability, sexuality and age as they affect individuals, families, community and the society as a whole. According Adams R, 2002, *'Personal experiences are inextricably linked to and determined by social, cultural, political and economic relationships within specific geographical and historical situations'*.

The concept of empowerment is to positively affect change and cause people to be proactive. The essential theme is for individuals to understand the framework of empowerment, be given the needed information and guided on making the right choices on issues that affects them.(Israel et al., 2005). In the concept of empowerment, individuals get the motivation to cause change and take absolute charge of their own environment; this can be physical, socio-economic, psychological and cultural issues. In this way all parties involved work as partners

and on equal terms. (Zimmerman, 2000). Empowerment is about helping people help themselves. (Vanderplaat, 1995, 1997).

Young people can basically be empowered when they have access to the right information to meet their needs. Information gathering holds a great impact in the lives of individuals and that alone can cause a positive change and movement in people's lives. Young people for this matter as well need the support of parents, friends, other siblings if they have and the community as a whole to help them gain a strong self-esteem.

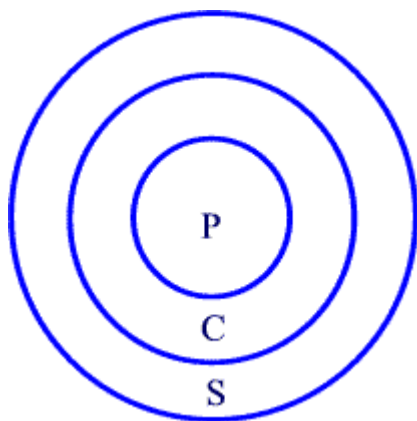
1.4.2 Social change

In the welfare services, systems or process of the working life, there is normally constrained by financial, social, legislative and organizational policies. Individuals or social work practitioners yearning to cause a change in those environments obviously are challenged with conflicts and competing demands on both their personal and professional resources. Social workers in the professional ethical skills who try to use anti oppressive principles to challenge some of these hostile and disempowering issues , often times end up affecting them and their clients as well.

'This process of location allows us to challenge those who see only our race, gender, or class, failing to understand that it is the interconnections, between the social divisions to which we belong that defines who we are, Dalrymple and Burke, 1995'.

Thompson's :THE PCS Model

According to Thompson (1997), the workings of oppression can be analysed using a model that examines three levels - P (*personal*) C (*cultural*) and S (*structural*):



Personal (P) Level : This is normally concerned with an individual's views, particularly in the case of a prejudice against a certain group of people. For example, this could relate to a young person who makes racist comments. It is purely related to **individual actions** and you are likely to come into contact with this in practice. The 'P' is located in the middle of the diagram, because that individual has his beliefs and ideas supported through two other levels.

Cultural (C) Level : This analysis relates to the 'shared values' or 'commonalties'. For example, shared beliefs about what is right and wrong, good or bad, can form a *consensus*.

Structural (S) Level : This analysis demonstrates how oppression is 'sewn into the fabric' of society through institutions that support both cultural norms and personal beliefs. Some institutions such as sections of the media, religion and the government can cement the beliefs. The following can be considered crucially:

- 'being able to carry out as many activities of daily living for oneself as possible and only using the minimum of technical support'
- 'the ability to be in control of and make decisions about one's life, rather than doing things alone or without help'

Attitudes have cognitive, emotional and functional dimension. (Wahlström, 1996). One does not feel comfortable when they are stigmatised and certain attitudes are attributed towards them because of the perceptions or misconceptions held on them. Attitudes comes in different forms, it may not only be physical but verbal as well. Attitudes are expressed with words like 'like / dislike', approach/ avoid and 'good /bad,' which make them judgemental by nature. When the object of attitude is very important, evaluation of the object can raise feelings. (Augostinos & Walker, 1995).

1.4.3 Partnership

It is vital that, clients are assisted and linked to all networks or bodies that will facilitate, improve and take care of their needed social services. Partnership is one key problem when it comes to social work with the oppressed. It always raises the issue of one important factor, which is 'Power'. People use power to manipulate, control, deprive, oppress, or operate in their own forms both on individuals and in structural levels. '*Power is a social concept, which can be used to explore the public and private spheres of life, Barker and Roberts: 1993*'.

It can be concluded that, anti-oppressive practice principles of reflexivity, social difference, historical and geographical location, the personal as political, power and powerless and the

act of challenging provides a framework which can be used on clients who need help such as the marginalized.

Sexuality and sexual behaviours are most often controlled by experiences, feelings and actions that the society provides to adolescent through their families, friends, professional helpers and the media. This therefore makes it very unclear for them to analyse which specific lifestyle they are in or want to be in until later in their lives. (Lehtonen, 1997). It is therefore important partnership is created between families, friends, professionals and the media as a whole in promoting good and quality sexual health education and needs to adolescents in order for them to live positive lifestyles and making informed choices.

In conclusion, it can be said that, when it comes to sex, sexuality of adolescents, different factors can mislead people in the way of interpreting their looks, and by the way, they dress, the places they go, make ups, choice of friends etc. It is very vital, Finnish teenagers get the platform to express how they want people from the multicultural group or the minority group view , acknowledge and interpret appropriately who they are and not by outward looks. In sensitive cases on sexuality surrounding same sexual relationships, people can also misinterpret individuals of heterosexual categories into gay categories by the way they look. When an individual lives or acts so that the others misjudge his / her gender, the phenomenon is called *gender blending*. A gender blender changes his / her appearance, behaviour, dressing or personality so much that the others cannot be sure of his gender at a given moment and can interpret it to be the opposite from what really is. (Lehtonen, 1997, Palo & Palo, 1999).

2. School Health Promotion Project in Kuitinmäki

This project has its focused group with the following categories:

7th graders: Wellness (smoking, alcoholic, nutrition, position, sleeping etc)

8th graders: First Aid practices

9th graders: Sexual health

The project aim is to promote good health behaviour, with various kinds of intervention. In order to achieve this students from Laurea University of Applied Sciences conducting the study are expected to learn to motivate the pupils with various methods. In implementing thesis themes of students, they are expected to carry out meaningful entities of the Kuitinmäki Secondary School health-teaching curriculum with other actors. At the end of the

study, students are expected if possible to produce new materials and methods of health education. This project gives students the opportunity to practice their guidance skills and theoretical knowledge from their respective courses.

Thesis ideas or themes expected from students must cover any of the following areas:

- Health promotion action days
- Prevention of mental health problems
- New culture sensitive touch
- All kinds of preventive materials for youngsters and materials for health education

The theme for last year was 'Multicultural Sensitivity' out of which the topic for the study was structured to focus on the 'Attitudes towards the Sexuality of Finnish teenagers'.

2. 1 Subject of the thesis

The subject of the thesis was to describe attitudes of multicultural teenagers towards Finnish teenagers on their sexualities. The research question was :

'Describe the attitudes towards the sexuality of Finnish teenagers'.

The research task was to plan, implement and evaluate a group discussion ,self completion questionnaire and a feedback meeting, after which the information can be used for a further study if need be or be used as recommendations to teachers in that scope of teaching when it comes to sexual health education. In so doing, it was hoped to develop a brochure on these related issues, information on where to find help or knowledge in related matters for the teenagers and be distributed at focal points.

2.2 Purpose & Aim

The purpose and aim of the thesis was to have an outcome that will create a platform where Finnish teenagers can share with other multicultural groups or the minority in the Finnish society, about what they think of their own sexuality as well as remove stereotypical ideologies and misconceptions about Finnish teenagers.

2.3 Methodology

According to Kaplan and Maxwell(1994), the motivation of doing qualitative research, as opposed to quantitative research, comes from the observation that, if there is one thing which distinguishes humans from the natural world, it is our ability to talk. With this understanding it is argued that the participants point of view and the social context involved is lost when information is quantified.

In qualitative research the research object should be placed in the context of the society. Also a historical perspective and an accurate picture should be given. (Eskola & Suoranta, 1999). That is why in my introduction and other connected themes I have explained what adolescence and attitude means.

Qualitative research is suitable for action development, alternative search and problem clarification. (Heikkilä, 1999). The most commonly used descriptive method in educational research is a survey. Its intention is to describe the nature of existing conditions or to decide the relations between specific events. (Cohen & Manion, 1994)

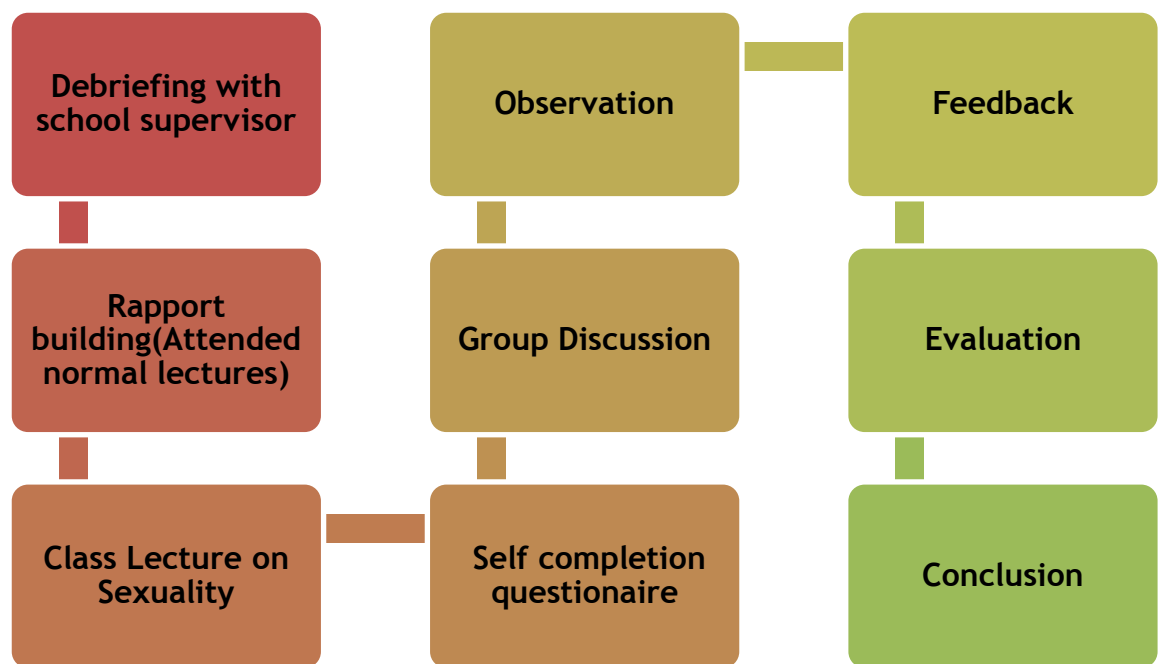
Qualitative research relies on transforming information from observations, reports and recordings into data in written form. It relies on a detailed and intricate description of events or people.(Alan Bryman 2008). Information will be recorded since the study is being implemented by an individual for effective documentation and there will also be a debriefing of what was understood to the students to be sure the right interpretation of the phenomena is justifiable and relevant for other circumstances.

In line with Lincoln and Guba's naturalistic' approach, qualitative research tends to operate on the assumption that social 'realities' are wholes that cannot be understood in isolation from their contexts, nor they can they be fragmented for separate study of their parts. (Lincoln and Guba 1985).

3. PLANNING

The study targeted on the 9th graders in the Kuitinmäki Secondary School with its objectives in empowering and creating a platform for them to be able to voice out their opinions on their sexuality. From the initial stages, series of meetings were held with the supervisors of the project in Laurea University of Applied sciences to discuss the main theme as well as with the supervisor in the Secondary School. It was agreed to have frequent sessions in discussing every stage of the project to gather feedback after which a conclusion will be drawn in the study based on the experiences of the teachers and students with references of previous studies on the topic if applicable.

3.1 Chart of the Action plan



3.2 Connection to the Project

The objectives expected of students in this project on the ‘Promotion of the well being of the 9th graders was connected during the implementation of the research work. Findings were analysed from group discussions, self-completion questionnaire, observation, class lecturing to the target group and one-on-one interaction with the tutor on Health and Sexual

Education. During the study, information was gathered on the attitudes, practices, theories used when dealing with multicultural students on the issues on sex education. This intervention generated useful information for the school on how they could improve their interaction, practices, effective use of theories and other related topics when dealing with the students on sexual health topics.

3.3 The Role of Teachers/Supervisors

Discussions were held on a regular basis with the teacher in the field of health and sex education who was as well the supervisor in the school for this project, to know their roles in the educational part of issues connected to the project and to analyse the effects, outcomes, feedback, or changes it has on students. Fortunately, the course for that term had similarities with the thesis topic because the entire autumn and winter courses were on issues surrounding sexually transmitted diseases, sex, sexuality and reproductive health issues. This made the foundational theory more visible since it assumes that every persuasive message is compared to the individual's current attitude. If the message is close to the existing attitude, change may take place, but if the message is too far from the current situation, the individual will reject the message and there will be no attitude change. (Deaux, Dane & Wrightsman, 1993). The meaning of words in attitude formation is secondary, if the action does not respond to the words. (Baron & Byrne, 1994). Though the topic was, a difficult one and supervisors were a bit worried on how successful it could go it however turned out quiet positive especially on the note when pupils were already having related courses to the thesis topic & project to be implemented.

3.4 The Student Group

All information gathered from the pupils was discussed with the respective tutors especially on views raised for change in health education aspect for their own well-being, this way it made the pupils to feel being heard and taken into consideration when it comes to changes and decision-making. Freire (1970). One area, which was considered during the planning stage, was to see how possible pupils will be comfortable for the tutor(s) to be around during the group or open forum, so that, they could listen and comment on the concerns raised by the pupils. The pupils were asked if that was a problem or concern for them and on a good note, they had no problem with it and were outspoken during the tutor's presence in all the sessions.

However, one aspect of this thesis was not feasible since it was noticed that all pupils were from the Finnish background. It was hoped to find pupils either from a mixed multicultural groups or from other minorities. Whilst having discussion with the pupils about this aspect, concerns came up that they were from different groupings within Finland, which consisted of the Finnish Swedes, Sami, Roma and Native Finns. However, that was not the focus but a group from a different minority group will have suited.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

The primary thing was to have a good rapport with the students; where there will be some sitting in a couple of their sessions on sex education. The 'most intrusive encouragement you can make are non verbal ones' (Morisson Anders, 2001). To designate that the interview is going well, the interviewer can, for example, smile or nod his/her head. In order to create a bond of sympathy and intimacy with the informants, maintaining eye contact is also helpful. (Morisson & Anders 2001). After sitting in the class with the pupils for about 2 different full class sessions, pupils open up the first stage of rapport building.

a. One on one interaction with tutor / supervisor

From the beginning stage throughout to the final stage of this study, there was a frequent sit in discussion with both the supervisors of this project in Laurea University of Applied Sciences and the supervisor in the Secondary school. On a more emphasis, a number of interactions were done with the supervisor in the Secondary school from the planning stage, discussing the theme, breaking down objectives, the questionnaire, the various forms for how it was going to be administered, feedback sessions after every stage etc. The communication and relationship with the supervisor was very good and was on a good mutual relationship, which helped made the study very easy and comfortable.

b. Class Lecture

In order to carry out a successful study, two periods were arranged for a whole discussion on sex, sexuality, empowerment, attitudes, racism, rights and contraceptives. A power point presentation was made before hand and was sent to the supervisor who studied it carefully and accepted it. The presentation was conducted, although pupils were a bit shy during the first period of the lecture, they later became very vocal, free with lots of interaction and participation on the topics presented. The supervisor was very pleased with the attitudes of the pupils and gave a very good feedback on how the lecture was conducted and how smooth

it went especially with the manner at which it was carried to the very basic level with demonstrations and examples to suit the age group of the pupils.

The issues in the lecture were on empowerment, sexuality, misconceptions, sexually transmitted diseases, rights and volunteers shared experiences of their teenage battles on issues about their sexualities. Appendix 5 gives details of the information used.

c. Questionnaire design

Since the method to be used for this study was the qualitative research method as stated from the thesis contract through to the thesis plan, a careful study was made on the format at which the questions were to be asked. The most important aspect which was given much focus was the fact that it was to remain as 'open ended questions' giving the respondents the chance to be able to give a free will answer from their own perspective without any restrictions on what exactly was to be put down. They were put into different categories which were the self-completion questionnaire and the group discussion questionnaire. Open ended questions allows the respondent to decide the wording of the answers, the length of the answer and the kind of matters to be raised in the answer. The questions tend to be short, and the answers tend to be long. (Denscombe, 1983).

d. Self-Completion

The techniques of data collection vary and one or several can be used in the same survey : structured or semi interviews, self-completion or postal questionnaires, standardized tests of attainment or performance, and attitude scales. (Cohen & Manion, 19994). A brief introduction was given to the class about the questionnaire and key words in the questionnaire were explained again into details such as 'Empowerment, Sexuality, Attitudes, Misconceptions and Perceptions'. Pupils were told to freely fill in the questionnaire and were not restricted to answer everything if they do not wish to. At the end of the questionnaire papers was an appendix of the key words in the questionnaire explained into details

Some of the questions posed in the self-completion questionnaire were as follows:

- *Describe how you understand on the sexual life of an individual*
- *Do you think all people have sexual rights? What are these rights? What do you think of sexual rights in general?*

e. Group Discussion

5 groups were formed by numbering each participant from number 1 to number 5. Similar number holders were to be in same group. Pupils were once again refreshed with previous explanations on the subject of the study and other key words in the questionnaire. Frequent guidance was given to groups from both the student on the study and the supervisor in the school. At the end of the questionnaire papers was an appendix of the key words in the questionnaire explained into details.

Some of the questions posed in the group discussion were as follows:

- *How do you feel about myths or misconceptions other multicultural groups have about Finnish teenagers? How do they react to these wrong perceptions when you interact with them on those lines.*
- *Do you think these perceptions are based on facts, myths, misconceptions and why?*

Appendix 1 gives all the other questions posed to the pupils.

For pupils to be able to remember and understand some of the key terms, foot notes were made at the end of the questionnaire giving detailed explanations of words such as empowerment, sexuality, rights, misconceptions, myths and a few others.

f. Observation

During the entire process of the administration of the questionnaire in both formats, both the student conducting the study and the supervisor of the project in the school made observations. After each session of interaction with the pupils, discussions were made on the reactions and what was observed and these were discussed with the pupils in order to be sure that the right information was being carried and not just an imagination or false conclusion and misinterpretation.

5. DATA ANALYSIS/ DISCUSSION

The purpose of analysing qualitative data is to make data more explicit and this way produce new information of the subject in question. The data summarized without losing the information it contains. Only the essential information defined by the research questions is separated from the rest of the data before categorizations. Interpretation can be made only from these categorizations (Eskola & Suorantan, 1999) and for that matter a thematic content analysis was used for this study.

Thematic analysis is a conservative practice in qualitative research which involves searching through data to identify any recurrent patterns. Normally in thematic analysis there are links categorized which gives similar meanings and usually emerge through the inductive analytic process which characterizes the qualitative pattern. The exploratory power of this popular technique can be enhanced by the analyst lacking previous knowledge of the research topic as they are not guided by any preconceptions. However, the analyst does not have to be an expert in the research topic or study. In order to begin analysis a researcher must have at least some conceptual understanding to guide the insight processes. Thematic content was used because it contained open ended questions, group discussion & self completion interviews. One positive aspect of using a thematic content analysis helps you to evaluate if your findings need to be improved, be studied again, decreased or increase. (Dennis L, 2003)

Thematic apperception sometimes reveal thoughts and feelings about which the subject is unwilling or unable to report some may say it gives an X-ray picture of the inner self. (Smith C, 1992). Thematic content analysis is an approach to the analysis of documents and texts that seeks to quantify content in terms of predetermined categories and in a systematic and replicable manner (Allan Bryan 2008). Thematic content analysis can allow information to be generated about social groups to which it is difficult to gain access.

The data was analyzed in a process where a general discussion and feedback was given to the pupils a week after a careful study was made on their responses to be sure if the right interpretation was being made. After which the data was categorized into gender responses and the common themes were structured out systematically. Then the gender responses were compared and the main issues from both gender responses were themed up. All students were able to fill out every space of all the questions asked except one pupil who filled some part and did not fill some other parts because that particular pupil was late to all the sessions, and did not understand clearly about the entire project.

5.1 Results of interviews (Analysis from gender basis)

The target group were made up of 16 girls and 8 boys however both genders acted out boldly and confident in class and during the questionnaire and group sessions.

a) Male pupils

The common key responses from the boys were as follows in their various themes:

1. How they feel and express their sexuality

All the responses were similar in the sense that they all feel very good about their sexuality, feels confident about their gender as boys and they are happy and ok with themselves. Some of the direct responses from the boys are :

'I feel good about it, I feel that all my thoughts and moods and things are normal'

'I am attracted to women I live myself. I like myself like I am. I am very comfortable with myself'

'I am comfortable and confident with my sexuality'

'I am a boy and I enjoy female company very much. I dress myself in cool clothes'

'I dress in cool clothes'

2. Perceptions about their sexuality from other multicultural groups

Some responded in the sense that most Finns are shy whilst others felt that wrong conceptions have been created in other people's mind about the Finns. Others respondents did not care or give attention to what people think about them whilst the rest have no idea what others think of them. Some of the direct responses are as follows:

'I think Finnish teenagers are a bit shy and not so often. I am not sure'

'I think that it is wrong to have misconceptions about your sexuality'

'Well maybe someone has met only one Finnish person and then think every Finnish person is like that person'

3. Personal experiences on wrong perceptions about their sexuality and how they reacted

From the responses of the pupils, some experienced negative approaches about their sexuality from other multicultural individuals whilst others did not experience it. About their approached on such issues, one could say the pupils do not give much attention and do not care what others think about them or whilst others responded that, they never get affected by the way others feel about them.

Some of the responses from the pupils were:"

'Almost every day to someone else but usually I don't pay attention'

'I feel negative perceptions every day, but it doesn't bother me'

4. Knowledge about sexuality and its related issues

From their responses, it was analyzed that the pupils got education about some of these issues on myths, stereotypical issues, sexuality and sex from their courses in school which deals specifically with their health needs. Some of the responses are as follows:

'We have a little of it in the health education lessons. Yes it does'

'I got education in school. Yes i think that these examples affect teens'

'Yes we get education'

5. Where, how they get knowledge, empowered and empower others on their sexual related issues

Analyzing the responses from the male pupils, they all get most of their knowledge and education either from the school whilst others get additional information from their parents, friends or by themselves. When it came to the empowerment aspect, some have their self or inner built confident about issues around them and are able to encourage others with low self-esteem. Some get that empowerment from what they are taught in school in relation to such topics. Example of some of the responses are :

'From my family and friends , from within myself'

'From my personal mind', 'From the energy i have'

'School encourages to do that and my parents'

Conclusion from male pupils

In conclusion, one could notice that, the male pupils had very strong personalities and feel very confident about themselves and their sexuality. When it comes to perceptions, experiences and approaches, the pupils hardly give attentions to negative attitudes and do not really care much about them or give very little attention. All students get their knowledge of sexual and sexuality education from their school. When it comes to empowerment, they all get these extra help and encouragement from families, friends and from within their own personalities.

b) Female pupils

1. How they feel and express their sexuality

All the girls felt positive and confident about their sexuality and felt ok to express their thoughts in any way whatsoever accepted as a normal norm in the society. Some gave long answers but with same ideas as the others. Some of the responses are:

'I am ok with my sexuality, sometimes I have problems with some things, but usually I am okay'

'I am straight and I am okay with it. As a person I can be quite shy sometimes'

'I am okay with myself'

About how they express their sexuality, all the girls felt confident about their make up as girls and were ok with it except for one respondent who does not feel very confident about her identity. Some of the responses are :

'I express my own sexuality my own way and I don't let other people get me down'

'Well I wear girls clothes and like to wear pretty clothes, do my hair and make- up'

'I am quite confident, i have friends. I don't have a boyfriend now but maybe i will soon'

'I don't really concentrate on expressing my sexuality, probably by being a girl. At school I am not that confident'

2. Perceptions about their sexuality from other multicultural groups

This particular section of the questions got the girls to write a lot and it had a sense of emotional attachments and seriousness to the issues they outlined. Some indicated that people assumes Finns are shy people. More emphasis and similar responses were raised on the fact that people think Finnish girls are 'cheap', 'whores' and easy to get. Some of the responses are as follows:

'Well in the same way, some are just bit more precise. They probably think we are lame and careful. And live in forest and make up things cause they really know nothing about us'

'Boys are shy and girls do not like it. They think we are whores and cocky and nasty to get into their stuff'

'Finnish people are usually quite shy. Most boys are quiet around girls. They think that Finnish girls are cheap and easy'

'I think some girl wear maybe a little too small and tight and open clothes at school. I don't really know but I have heard that other people from other countries that Finnish girls are blond and have blue eyes'

Although the responses were quite passionate on how people have wrong ideas about their sexuality, on the other hand, the respondents did not give much attention or care about what people concludes about them and their lifestyles as far as sexuality issues are in concern. Examples of the answers are:

'I don't really care, but it doesn't feel nice'

'It is not nice because it isn't true also i think it is waste of time'

'Its not nice, but usually i don't care'

'I don't really feel anything about it'

'I don't care what they think of me'

3. Personal experiences on wrong perceptions about their sexuality and how they reacted

In relating to the wrong perceptions other's hold about the Finnish teenagers as enumerated above in one of the questions, this area had similarities to those answers. Most of the girls had negative and unfortunate experiences about their sexuality and were labeled with indecent words, however some approached the situation whilst others do not care and walk off such encounters. It was interesting to notice that all girls had experience a negative approach one-way or the other except one of the girls and she however said she would not have cared anyway. Some of the answers are as follows:

'Somebody has called me a whore like just for fun and its not even fun even if its for 'fun', I just didn't say anything I tried to ignore that and went away'

'Somebody said something stupid to me and I didn't like. Then I say back to them or if I don't mind i don't say anything'

'I have been called as a whore without reason. I don't care ore then I say back something By rumors or some rare occasions happened before'

'Minorities guys have called me a whore or some other things, haven't done. I approached by standing up and telling the truth which is really a waste cause it doesn't change anything'

'Some people might stare at me strangely and then i stare back'

However, some of the girls do not give much attention to these negative thoughts, whereas others decides to approach the situation(s) to the extent of fighting and in some situations others just walk away frustrated and sad. Some of the responses are ;

'I felt bad because i had just went away when they called me that but maybe its better that way'

'Happy with myself for trying to do something about it'

'Frustrated'

4. Knowledge about sexuality and its related issues

The respondent gave common answers as getting most of the knowledge and education about their sexual health issues from school. Some of the answers were:

'Yes. In school, we touched the subject on eight grade but didn't really dig in deep'

'Yes we do. Everything basic stuff. Yes i think so'

'Yes in school a bit about basic stuff. Not really. It would be nice if would be'

5. Where, how they get knowledge, empowered and empower others on their sexual related issues

Most of the girls responded that they are empowered from friends with a few saying through their inner selves. Some of the responses were:

'From me and my sister and other relatives + friends and music'

'Because i want to make a change there i get the power'

'It comes from inside me and then from my friends and family'

However, on the aspect of how they can help or empower their friends when found in similar situations, two respondents did not understand the question whilst the others answered confidently in helping out to their other friends if faced with similar challenges.

Conclusion from female pupils

From the analysis from the female perspective, when it comes to their own sexuality, they feel very confident about themselves and express their sexuality in a normal way. When it comes to their experiences and approaches on negative attitudes towards their sexuality, it is quite interesting to notice that, almost all the female pupils had had a negative encounter from the minority. However, one student made one statement as follows:

'Finnish girls feel flattered around foreign boys because they give extra attention to girls and are not shy. So Finnish girls fall on them easily because we have not get used to the kind of treatment'

That becomes a debatable statement since one cannot tell for a fact that teenagers are fond of being around the minority because they flatter them unlike the native Finnish men, making

the minority think the female finns are rather 'cheap' or 'easy to get' as used in the responses of the pupils.

However, on an important note, the female do not care much about what others think of the, some walk away and a few confront the issue. All the same it does not affect them mentally or in any other way. Just like the responses from the male pupils, the females as well get education of issues on their sexual and sexuality issues from the school. The female as well get empowered from friends, family or within their own personalities.

a) Analysis from both gender basis in a table

Gender	Feelings & Expressions of Sexuality	Perceptions from Minorities & Personal experiences	Feelings of these misconceptions	Approach on the issues & their feedback	Source of Knowledge & Empowerment
Females	<p><u>Feelings</u></p> <p>More than half of the responses said : <u>'I am okay with my sexuality'</u></p> <p>The other part said : <u>'I am confident with myself'</u></p> <p>The few left said <u>'I am comfortable with myself'</u> <u>'Boys are shy and girls do not like it'</u></p> <p><u>Expressions</u></p> <p>Majority said</p>	<p>Majority said <u>'People see us as cheap, whores and easy to get'</u></p> <p>Others said <u>'People think Finns are shy'</u></p> <p>Some added <u>'People think we live in the forest, lame & careful, blond, have blue eyes'</u></p> <p>One person said <u>'I don't care what they think about me'</u></p>	<p>Majority said <u>'I don't care'</u></p> <p>Few others said <u>'it is not nice, I don't like it & it is annoying'</u></p> <p>Additional comment: <u>'Finnish girls feel flattered around foreign boys because</u></p>	<p><u>Approaches</u></p> <p>For most of them who were called whores they said <u>'I don't care or I walk away'</u></p> <p><u>'I defend myself though it's a waste of time because it changes nothing'</u></p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Those who approaches the issues said <u>'They don't say anything or they look away'</u></p>	<p>All responses said their knowledge is <u>'From school'</u></p> <p><u>Empowerment</u></p> <p>Most of them said <u>'From friends or families'</u></p>

	<p><u>'I wear girls clothes and feel normal'</u></p> <p><u>'I express my sexually openly and normal'</u></p> <p><u>'I am myself and feel confident'</u></p> <p>Two responses said</p> <p><u>'I am a bit'</u> the other</p> <p><u>'I am not confident expressing my myself as a girl'</u></p>		<p><u>they give extra attention to girls and are not shy. So Finnish girls fall on them easily because we have not get used to the kind of treatment'</u></p>	<p>Few said</p> <p><u>'They laugh if they are in a bigger group or argue'</u></p>	<p>Few said</p> <p><u>'From within myself'</u></p>
Males	Feelings & Expressions of Sexuality	Perceptions from Minorities & Personal experiences	Feelings of these misconceptions	Approach on the issues & their feedback	Source of Knowledge & Empowerment
	<p>Feelings</p> <p>All of them said <u>'I feel good about myself, am confident & comfortable'</u></p> <p>Expressions</p> <p>All of them said <u>'By dressing'</u></p> <p>Some said <u>'Finns are a bit shy but its normal'</u></p>	<p><i>Most of them have not experience any negative attitude but one of them says</i></p> <p><u>'I feel negative perceptions every day, but it doesn't bother me'</u></p>	<p>All of them said <u>'They do not care what others think of them'</u></p>	<p>It is assumed that since most of them have not experience any negative attitude. Their response came as same as</p> <p><u>'They fell happy about themselves'</u></p>	<p>Knowledge</p> <p>They all said <u>'we get knowledge from school'</u></p> <p>Empowerment</p> <p>Most of them said <u>'From school, family, friends and within themselves'</u></p>

Conclusion from both gender analyses

In conclusion, the themes that came up in the findings for both sexes could be analysed as follows:

Feelings & Expressions: Both gender groups felt good, confident and comfortable with their sexualities.

Perceptions from minorities & Personal experiences: The males hardly encounter negative experiences except for one respondent who said he experiences it every day. Unlike the female pupils, they have all in one way or the other experienced a negative attitude from the minority.

Feelings of these misconceptions: Both genders do not care about what others think or feel about their personalities as a whole.

Approach on the issues and their feedback: Some of the female pupils answered that they walk away from such issues whilst one of them rather defends the situation although for her it changes nothing. They do not get a positive feedback after confronting such issues perhaps that may in one way or the other does not empower the Finnish teenagers to always be on their groups but it cannot be concluded on for a fact or truth.

Source of knowledge & Empowerment: Both genders get knowledge of these issues from their school. Both genders as well get empowered through friends, families and from within their own personalities.

b) Analysis from Group discussion

During the group discussion feedback time, jokes and misconceptions amongst the smaller groups in Finland were rather discussed where some said Finns from the northern part were mostly shy than those in the city. The group discussion was very lively and the pupils participated in it in a very positive way.

An introductory session was held and key issues were discussed for pupils to have ideas about what was expected of them to answer. Then ample time was given for the group discussion whilst the facilitator/ student and the supervisor went from group to group from time to time to assist the pupils with difficult issues.

Groups then selected a nominee to present the work to the entire class which went very well and interesting where in some instances some of the group members were very confident in

adding more issues after the presentations were made with others correcting their nominee when errors were made. There were groups from A to E. below are some of the issues and responses that came up after the group work:

Group A (Sexuality of individuals and Rights)

Pupils had a good understanding of what sexuality and rights meant and they explained it accordingly. They were very much aware of the fact that everyone has rights of which they need to exercise and for others to respect them on those rights as well. Some part of their response was:

‘Yes, but they are not always followed . you cant have sex with someone who doesn’t want it. You don’t have to have sex if you don’t want to. No one can touch you in appropriate ways if you don’t want. Sexual rights are good to have and they should be followed’

Group B (Misconceptions about the Sexuality their sexuality and its basis)

The responses showed that, pupils were very much aware of the fact that there are lot of misconceptions gathered about their identities and sexuality. They were also aware on the fact that some of their nationals are not friendly however, they feel very confident to express the fact they are down to earth people who live an average lifestyle. Below are the comments they gave on the concerns about misconceptions.

‘In general Finns are thought as independent and quiet and so social / open people other. Teenagers think that Finns are racists. They think Finns live in North Pole. People who haven’t visited Finland think we live in forest. They think Finnish girls are blond and have blue eyes’

‘Finland is a small country and nobody knows anything about it and they make things up. Bus drivers don’t say hi. Finns don’t show off and they don’t need / want attention. Finns have a think against Swedes. And they don’t like people who come to with the money they draw from KELA.’

Group C(Feelings about the misconceptions and its basis)

Responses from the group signified their maturity and boldness in approaching issues that affects their identities. It is quite impressive to be aware that, teenagers do not really mind how other people think about them. They were also aware of other conceptions about them on the issue of alcoholism. Below are the responses they gave concerning the issue.

'We know some people wrong about us, but we don't really care about other people's thoughts. But in some occasions we stand up towards wrong thoughts. Other people usually react by thinking we are proud'

'Perceptions are a mix of facts, myths and misconceptions and have become bigger than in reality. Example is only a small people of population who actually have a problem with alcohol.'

Group D (Addressing & Education about misconceptions)

The group gave more emphasis during their presentation on the task given to them on how and the importance of educating people on how to eliminate wrong perceptions about the Finnish teenagers and their sexuality. On common terms, the group outlined that education could be passed through different formats such as campaigns, through the media and resource persons visiting groups in different organizations or institutions to address those issues.

Group E (Empowerment)

The group gained a very good understanding of what empowerment was and how they could empower others. Some of the simple answers they gave was:

'Empowerment means to help and give strength to others'

During their presentation, they gave practical examples and demonstrations on how to empower others and be self empowered.

Conclusion from group analysis

The group discussion was done well and became very interesting as pupils were vocally expressing these issues. They emphasized on the need to give more education about sexuality issues through different mediums from schools, media, brochures etc.

Pupils are also aware of the fact that, minorities have different opinions about the Finnish country and the population. All the same, they do not care much about how they are seen in different perspective since they are aware themselves as individuals and as a nation of who they really are.

Pupils are aware of their sexual rights and stand confident in issues surrounding their sexualities. In their view, that could be a sign of pride to other people but to the pupils they are only confident and will stand up to issues affecting their rights and sexuality.

It can be concluded that, the group discussion went very well, because pupils were enabled to discuss more about these issues and others who may have not had a clear understanding about the issues got the chance to ask for more clarifications.

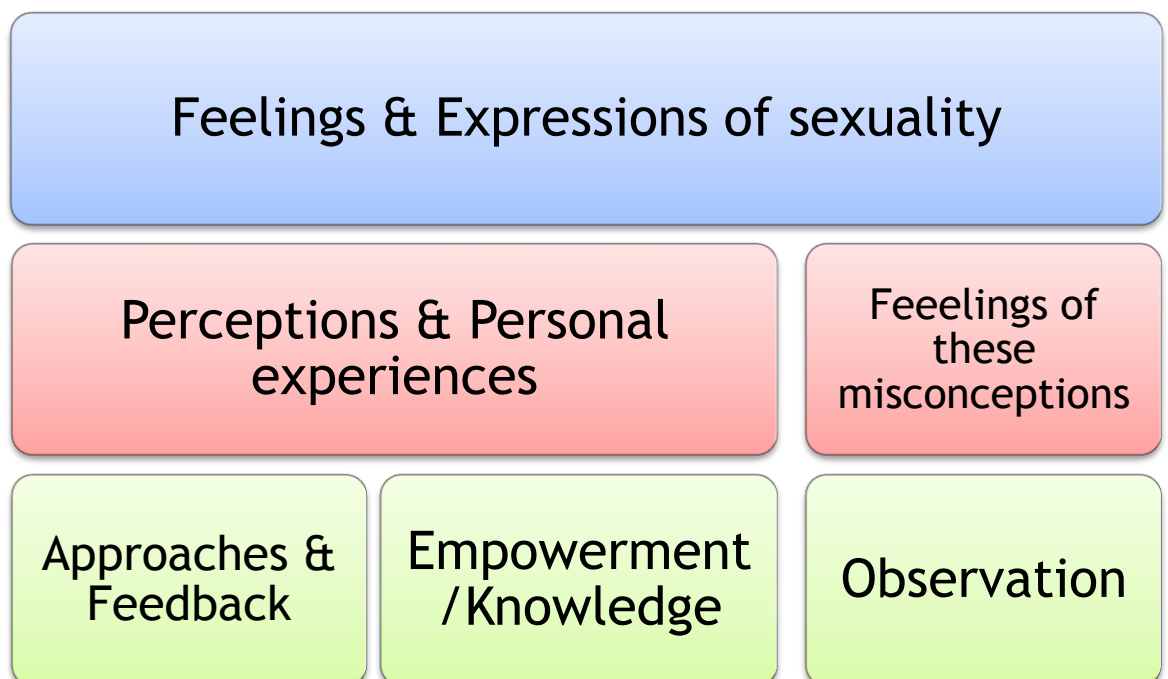
c) Observation

During the administration of the questionnaires, group discussions, presentation of group work, open forum, feedback sessions and the initial lectures and closing lectures, it was observed that pupils had a good self-esteem. They ignore and do not care about what other people think of them and were not very bothered. Although most of those issues were raised the fact that it was sometimes a concern the pupils seem not to be very bothered about it.

Pupils were open minded and very vocal at expressing themselves about the issues at hand and they participated effectively in the group discussion without observing any who was shy about the issues. The pupils were very confident and comfortable amongst themselves and had a positive way of working as a team.

Appendix 3b gives detailed and exact responses from the specific genders (boys & girls)

Themes that were analysed & Concluded from the study were:



From the in-depth explanation and discussion of the responses gathered from the various genders, the common themes that were analysed have been listed above in the chart. The sub sizes used in the chart signifies the amount of response and concerns of those issues at hand.

a. Feelings & Expressions

During the early stage of this study, pupils did not have much idea about what sexuality meant and felt it was only associated to sex. After gaining understanding about those issues, their responses about their sexuality and identities was not a worry or issue to be concerned about since they all had a positive feeling for who they are and loved themselves for their make up even if other people had issues with it. They seem to be comfortable about how they are and give little or no attention to some of the myths surrounding their identities.

b. Perceptions & Experiences

Both male and female pupils had encountered negative attitudes from other people from different multicultural backgrounds about their sexuality. Analysing the responses especially from the girls shows that many minorities do have quiet 'weird' and wrong perceptions about these adolescents and if not addressed well could affect the future of these young and upcoming ones. It may perhaps increase immorality if they are pressured from males from other multicultural groups into early relationships and sexual lives. However, the good aspect was that pupils were always ready to confront such issues or ignore the situation since they know within themselves that those issues are wrong.

c. Feelings of these misconceptions

Pupils are not bothered with how other minorities think about them and they have their own personal confident in being themselves.

d. Approaches & Feedback

Most pupils do not confront issues affecting them in a negative way from minorities because they do not care much and live a comfortable lifestyle. However, a few of them do confront the issues and they get the minority being quite or in one of the respondents, the minority laughs when they are in a group. But then, these attitudes still do not affect the teenagers in a negative way.

e. Source of knowledge & Empowerment

It is quite a good thing to include such topics in their normal educational curriculum because it gives them more ideas on how to handle their own sexuality as they are in their early peaks into entering into adulthood. As they mentioned in their comments, more education as well needs to be given to others in different multicultural groups about the wrong perceptions on the sexuality of these teens. If such issues are addressed, perhaps it will limit or erase the sad and challenging encounters these young ones face daily especially with some being called '*whores*'. In respect, it was visible that the teens were empowered in their own

natural way from within themselves whilst having other positive backups and being empowered through friends, families and in school.

Conclusion from thematic analysis

The other issues were about observation made on their attitude towards the study. They seem to look happy and comfortable with the issues. However, other concerns came up from them about the issues of alcoholism and the fact that other nationalities take advantage of social benefits from institutions like KELA.

The thematic analysis used in structuring out the data from this study was very effective since it did not outline boundaries on the kind of information that was taken. Regular feedback were passed across to respondents to be sure if that was what they actually meant to say and there were lot of open discussions at every visit which made communication about the issues very easy to follow and understand.

After all the sessions, there was a final lecture given to the pupils on empowerment , self esteem and sexuality. The purpose was to increase their self-confident and maintain their positive reactions about how they feel.

6. EVALUATION OF WORKING PROCESS

In order to make the data collection analysis valid and reliable, it was carefully studied and examined before a final interpretation was given to it. In order to achieve this, lot of feedback sessions were held at every stage of the entire project with supervisors from Laurea University of Applied Sciences, the supervisor in the secondary school and with the pupils involved in the study. The SWOT analysis was used in analysing the stages from time to time and the SMART analysis was used for the entire project.

Processes (SWOT analysis)

Theoretical background

The SWOT analysis, which is a common tool for evaluating research projects, was used for this study since it makes it easier to identify the strength, weaknesses, limitations and opportunities in helping access how well or bad a project is undergoing. This makes it easier to identify challenges in the process and correct when applicable. It also helps brings out thematic areas for future developments. (Classroom lectures- Qualitative research, Tobias Pötsch). In doing so, it helps one to know if goals and objectives are obtainable or can be re

considered. This however illustrates out the external and internal factors both in the positive and negative ways of a project.

a. Initial process/ choosing the topic/ Planning

➤ Strength

There was enough and appropriate assistance from all three supervisors on this project. The communication was very good which made it easy for this study to be conducted. All meetings and schedules arranged with supervisors were done accordingly.

Creating the timetable for the project helped in making it a success when the study was implemented. Every schedule agreed on was accurately met although the final report on the findings delayed.

➤ Weaknesses

Working alone with lot of objectives which could not be carried out though there was a greater wish in implementing all of them. During the early stage, there was an inclusion of interviewing teenagers from different multicultural groups in order to compare both responses from the natives and the other groups and to create an open forum for both nationalities to meet to address these myths. It was also included that, a material on sexuality and empowerment will be produced in the form of a brochure, which will as well include places, sources and other materials for pupils to seek for more information on these issues surrounding their identities and sexuality.

➤ Limitation

Supervisors were not sure of the outcome of participation from the target group since the topic was quite a sensitive one. There were concerns to re adjust the topic and the issues in the questionnaire however, the student was confident about carrying out the project to see what the outcome was going to be though there was a little fear of ending up embarrassing an empty project or with low outcome.

➤ Opportunities

The Project was in line with a current course on same subject matter and that made it a good timing for it to be conducted without making pupils feel interrupted on any new subject or course if it were applicable.

b. Theses contract & Plan

➤ Strength

Discussions were made with all supervisors before they were presented to be accepted at the presentation days. Lot of re adjustment was made from time to time because the initial ideas were quite bulky. It was quite a positive experience to have supervisors who were concerned on the workload of the project for an individual to take else it may have been a total chaos.

➤ Weaknesses

From the plan and contracts, there were too many objectives wanting to be achieved and this made the workload to look difficult from the start although there was a great zeal in accomplishing all the objectives.

➤ Limitation

Being unable to reach other target group as planned brought a sense of fear if the aim and purpose of the project will be achieved. There was a fear of not being able to gather any negative experience or encounter from the target group and the project was almost changed into another.

➤ Opportunities

Student conducting the project had a personal flair in working with adolescents. Student had as well gained past experience in working with young teenagers on their Sexual and Reproductive Health issues.

c. Questionnaire

➤ Strength

Discussions were made with supervisors about the questionnaires and though it was quite much in the initial stages, supervisors assisted in making it fewer and more level minded to the age group of the target to be interviewed. Supervisors were flexible in helping edit some of the questions where applicable to direct the themes and as well advising on the use of big vocabularies and terms to be eliminated. Editions were appropriately made on some of the questions.

➤ Weaknesses

Although there was a footnote, on some, the technical words like empowerment etc, pupils still had few challenges and more explanations were to be made from time to time.

➤ Limitation

Questions for minorities had to be taken out since there were no pupils from other multicultural group and there was a fear on how the outcome of the responses was going to turn out.

➤ Opportunities

More emphasis was laid on questions surrounding myths, stereotypes, misconceptions that turn out to be very good since pupils had encountered similar reactions on countless times.

d. General Feedback session

After the study had been conducted, there was a feedback session with the supervisor in the school as well as with the pupils.

Strength

Interaction with the pupils were very good and it made communication very easy. The sit in sessions that were done in the early stage helped in creating a good rapport with the pupils.

A warm up session was created during the first lecture given to the students to make them feel at ease and comfortable and that broke the ice in their shyness.

The fact that the supervisors had keen interest in the project and its outcome was very positive enhancing the study to be done well and quickly. More importantly more positive zeal was gathered after realizing, the principal of the Secondary school was as well interested with the outcome.

➤ Weaknesses

Students were shy initially and having the perception that they are shy people was a bit of a worry especially with the student conducting the research coming from a different multicultural background. However, pupils were easy to be engaged with.

Some of the questions were too technically posed which could have created a lot of problems if frequent assistance was not given to pupils from time to time. Words like empowerment were new to the pupils and some ended up forgetting about the word after some time however, frequent discussions were made on it and by the end of the entire session, it became a common word to be used.

➤ Limitation

During the group discussion, one group had a problem starting with the task at hand and the observation made from the supervisor was that, there are sometimes difficult encounters for

individuals when different personalities have to meet for a specific issue. However, the supervisor noticed the inactiveness of this group and urge to communicate at an early point, else the result of the discussion will have turn out void from that group.

➤ Opportunities

Their readiness to ask free questions and assistance was a very good and motivating aspect of the pupils. At a point, pupils got interested in asking more questions about the student to the extent of the student personal life in a more appropriate way, which gave chances for them to open up more as they got excited to know more about an individual from a different multicultural background.

Pupils also ceased the opportunities to ask many questions about the continent from which the student was coming from and more specifically about the country of origin and the cultural life styles. At a point, pupils also asked questions raised in the questionnaire in relation to individuals from the cultural background of the student as the pupils were also very curious.

e. Feedback from Supervisor & Pupils

The pupils gave positive responses about the research conducted and were very pleased about the entire project. On one of the days when the student was unable to visit the school to undertake one of the activities, it was gathered that pupils got very sad and disappointed about it and were worried about any other absenteeism if any will come up again. This was quite a positive reaction making the project a success. Pupils had no negative feedback about the entire project or the attitude of the student who conducted the study.

The supervisor gave the following remarks to the student after the study was conducted during one of the feedback sessions.

‘Handling of the class was good, you didn’t bother about if they were shy or not but kept on going and they interacted well’

‘Although this group have a good a language command next time more simplier words should be used’. Avoid terms like perceptions and other academic words’

‘Your attitude throughout was positive which was remarkable’

‘Students were comfortable with you’

‘Being absent on one of the days got students disappointed and they kept asking questions on when next you were going to come and why you were not able to come’

‘The initial lectured was well gathered and you were well informed and had interacted with teenagers for long which was a good thing’

‘The practical examples demonstrated during the lectures were also very good making it easier for the pupils to understand and follow’

f. Analysis of entire project (SMART analysis)

Theoretical background

Every project, study or business is unique and normally encounters its own challenges from phase to phase. When analysing a project, it gives chances in changing things, creating new benchmarks, have new expectations and have different objectives. One way to effectively manage a study is by using a SMART analysis.

- **Specific** objectives are important. Being specific helps one not to lose sight of the main objectives. It helps you attain your goals better and keeps you more focus on the particular client group needed which can intend help you to get a higher average order value to meet the objectives better
- **Measurable** objectives are essential if one is able to manage the performance in meeting them. Normally one needs to manage what can be measured and not what cannot be measured. Through this one is able to measure the processes of how to gather the data, how to sort it, and most important, how to use it to make informed decisions.
- **Achievable** objectives are ones which can be accomplished with the available resources. For these resources the right benchmark needs to be planned on. If one uses a goal higher or beyond the resources available it makes it difficult or impossible to achieve one's aims.
- **Realistic** objectives are about context and resources. It may be perfectly achievable to meet a certain objective, but only with greater resources than may be presently available.
- **Time-bound** is the final part of a SMART objective. If there is no timeline, no project can ever fail, since it cannot run out of time. It is important that milestones and deadlines be set so that expectations can be managed and course corrections made. (Shankarsoma,2011)

SMART Analysis made from the study conducted

Specific: The goals were specific and straight to the point. Although the issues were quiet sensitive and challenging, they were everyday lifestyles individuals encounter one-way or the other.

Measurable : The objectives were partly measurable in the sense that, it created a platform for the pupils to vocally express thoughts about their identities, sexuality, how they think others think for them and what they want to be known for. This aspect was highly achieved. However, the aspect of the other target group (minority) could not be measured.

Achievable: There were quiet too many objectives to be accomplished, which could have made the report more interesting however, it was a heavy workload and what was carried out as well came out very well. It is hoped in future that others will continue the project on the second level to access responses from other multicultural teenagers.

Realistic: The project was partly realistic because the appropriate resources needed to accomplish the study were partly attained. The key part was that all pupils had a very good command of the English language, which was a fundamental aspect of the project. The supervisor as well had a very good command of the English language that made communication very easy and appropriate.

Timed: A time- table was made on the processes for the project, which went on as planed, and very well, except for the part of the final findings, which delayed because of lack of motivation to continue since an individual, took the project.

7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethical issues are very vital in any social work implementation, therefore information that need confidential basis will not be crossed over to a third party. For informants to also feel secure and anonymous, personal details will not be reflected on the filled in part of the person filling in the form, such as name, address, phone number, etc.(Punch 1998, 281-282).

The participants were made aware of the contents of the study and letter of consents were sent to the parents before hand to be aware of the situation and to acknowledge if they wanted their children to take part of the project. Appendix two shows the draft letter sent to the parents of the target group. Because it is important issues of confidentiality, informed consent, appropriate procedures and clients view plays equal roles throughout. (Ponterontto et al. 2001, 599).

8.1 Trust worthiness

There was a debriefing session with both tutor (s) and participants about the data collected to give them an opportunity to review the researcher's interpretation of the data. (Koch, 1994 & Guba & Lincon 1989). A letter of consent was also sent to all parents three weeks prior to the study to be conducted and out of which there was no negative feedback or refusal of any pupil from taking part in it. Appendix 2 shows the draft of the letter sent.

8.2 Reliability and Validity

To have some knowledge about the students and understanding of processes in the school, different discussions were held with the tutor who is directly responsible for health education and teaches them sex education and health. For the purpose of full participation and effective communication, the supervisor chose the group that is most vocal and interested in issues relating to sexual health education. Since the interview was to be conducted in English, the supervisor assured that was the best group to use since all the pupils could express themselves easily in the English language.

Since this study could not attain its full aim and purpose, one cannot conclude as a fact that, all minorities or most minorities have negative attitudes and perceptions towards the Finnish teenagers. Report from this study gives information from only one side being a section of the Finnish teenagers. However, the content of the study conducted and its achievement is reliable since pupils were included in the evaluation.

8. CONCLUSION

There is a general conception that minorities do experience a lot of oppression in various forms, which makes the marginalized group pose's special characteristics when compared to the natives who suffer from very few cultural problems as compared to those changing locations due to challenging circumstances. It is normally known as a fact that background factors may be the most diverse; embracing the changes brought about by migration, integration, acceptance, the poor mental and/or physical condition of the oppressed, long-term relationships and the different cultural attitudes for example, concerning breaking out from family or intimate relations. After conducting this study, one needs to know that natives

of a particular location do as well go through negative encounters which is not a pleasant thing to be associated with knowing very well that that is not what they are made of.

Although there was some concerns from the tutors on how successful the topic could work out since it was quite a sensitive one, it had a positive outcome with student participating in it freely and they were very vocal. The supervisor made mention of the fact that the principal was interested in the outcome of the project which made it quite motivating and interesting.

The purpose and aim of the thesis was to have an outcome that will create a platform where Finnish teenagers can share with other multicultural groups or the minority in the Finnish society, about what they think of their own sexuality as well as remove stereotypical ideologies and misconceptions about Finnish teenagers. The research task was to plan, implement and evaluate a group discussion, self completion questionnaire and a feedback meeting, after which the information can be used for a further study if need be or be used as recommendations to teachers in that scope of teaching when it comes to sexual health education. In so doing, it was hoped to develop a brochure on these related issues, information on where to find help or knowledge in related matters for the teenagers and be distributed at focal points. From the analysis with its highest issues on encounters, experiences and perceptions on the sexuality of Finnish teenagers, it can be concluded that the purpose of the study was partly attained. A platform was however created effectively where pupils had the chance to discuss amongst themselves and as well as in front of their tutor about their sexuality very boldly but. However, it lacked the platform where both the Finnish teenagers and the minority teenagers could have possibly come together to discuss this issue in depth. If the platform was created (both Finnish teenagers and other teenagers from different multicultural backgrounds) to bring out suggestions and the way forward, it will have been the recommendation material to the school in helping make these sensitive issues well discussed from the classroom level.

The education pupils receive in the school was a good approach since it was visible positively from the interaction and responses from them. It had great impacts on the pupils as one noticed how they were very bold, had inner self-confidence, and were comfortable with their sexualities and identities. However, the restraints from this study were the fact that the minority group was not available to be interviewed to know the perceptions and misconceptions from themselves. This made it difficult to conclude fully if the responses from the pupils are 100% accurate.

With most of the pupil's coming from Espoo where there was a limited multicultural teenagers it was suggested from the school supervisor that, an area like the Eastern part of Helsinki could be considered in future on a similar topic to compare responses. Getting responses from a minority perspective will help achieve greater and positive results.

No further materials were made for pupils since it was agreed from the supervisors from Laurea University of Applied Sciences as well as the supervisor in the Secondary school that the work load was enough for the project being carried out by an individual. However, some links and useful centres were recommended to the pupils on how they could find more information on issues affecting their well being and sexual life styles. It is recommended that a further study be conducted more on attitudes towards the sexuality of Finnish teenagers. More materials on attitudes, empowerment, sexuality and rights could be made available to enhance pupil's knowledge. More information for teenagers could be found from the following:

- *Seksuaalipoliittinen Yhdistys Sexpo Ry* (Sexual Policy Association). Address: Nilsininkatu 11-13, SF-00510 Helsinki, Finland.
- *Seksuaalinen Tasavertaisuus SETA Ry* (Sexual Equality Association). Address: Oikokatu 3, SF-00170 Helsinki, Finland.
- Käyntiosoite: Kalevankatu 16 , Postiosoite: PL 849, 00101 Helsinki
Puhelinvaihe: (09) 228 050, Faksi: (09) 612 1211, <http://www.vaestoliitto.fi/>

Since no materials within Finland were found on this specific study relating to minorities and their attitudes towards the sexuality of Finnish teenagers, it will be appropriate if a further search is conducted in this particular area.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1 Preliminary Time Table

A timetable was drafted to guide the study to be implemented successfully and within the set time framed. However, that was not possible because there was a break in the study for summer holidays as well as an abroad internship making submission of report to be delayed from June to September.

DATE	ACTIVITY	EXPECTED OUTCOME
September 2010	1.Meeting with tutors 2.Meeting with supervisor in Kuitimäki school	Discussion of the research project
October 2010	Thesis incubator	Presentation of contract
October 2010	Meeting with supervisor in Kuitimäki school	In-depth discussion of the implementation process
October 2010	Thesis Plan	Presentation of thesis plan
28.10.2011	Discussion of final plan	Supervisor-Kuitinmäki-10am
November 2010		
3.11.2010	Familiarization with class lectures On sex education Interviews	13.15
15.11.2010	Questionnaires	8.15-9.45
17.11.2010	Group Discussion Feedback meetings Tutors and Supervisor	11.15-14.00 Data collection and transcription
December 2010	Thesis Workshops	Guidance on data
January 2011	Thesis Workshops	Data analysis
(After practice placement February 2011	Thesis Workshops	Thesis trustworthiness and evaluation to be guided on
May 2011	Submitting Thesis	

May 2011	Evaluating Seminars	
June 2011	Maturity test	
June 2011	Submitting the final work published	WAS NOT POSSIBLE
September 2011	Submitting the final work	

Appendix 2

Self-completion

One- one - one interview was based on the following:

1. How old are you?
2. How do you feel about your sexuality?
3. How do you express your sexuality?
4. Describe what you think about how the Finnish teenagers express their sexuality? Describe the perceptions multicultural students or minorities hold about the way you express your sexuality?
5. How do they/do you feel about this?
6. How did you/they develop these perceptions?
7. Do you receive education on your sexuality? Does this education address myths, misconceptions, stereotypes and negative perceptions about the sexual behaviours of the Finnish teenager?
8. In which ways have you ever experienced any of such negative perceptions? In which ways were you approached based on these thoughts or perceptions?
9. How did you react or how did he/she react?
10. How did you feel?
11. Is there something you or institutions can do about these perceptions?
12. Do you have any other concern or additional information?

Group discussion

The group discussions was guided by the following questions:

1. What do you understand to mean sexual life of an individual?
2. Do all people have sexual rights? What are these rights? What do you think of sexual rights?
3. What are some of the perceptions you hold or multicultural students hold about the sexual lifestyles of the Finnish teenagers?
4. What are some of the basis or reason for these perceptions or thoughts?
5. How do you feel about these perceptions? How do they react to these perceptions when you interact with them on those lines?
6. Are these perceptions based on facts or myths and misconceptions?
7. Do you think or want something to be done about these perceptions?
8. Can you suggest some strategies or information that can be used to correct these perceptions?

Appendix 3 (Letter of consent to parents)

Cecilia N. Quarshie

SWG08, Social Services

Laurea University of Applied Sciences

Metsänpojankatu 3

02130 Espoo, Finland

Dear Parent,

LETTER OF CONSENT ON THESES PROJECT

I am a 3rd year student in Laurea University of Applied Sciences, and I will like to ask for permission and inform you about the upcoming theses project that will take place between November 2010 until January 2011 in Kuitinmäki Secondary 9th graders. The subject of the thesis is assess racial attitudes and perceptions of multicultural groups towards Finnish teenagers on their sexual lifestyles and what Finnish teenagers will want to be known for.

The purpose of the thesis is to empower the teenagers to live a positive sexual lifestyle and produce an outcome that will create a platform where Finnish teenagers can share with other multicultural groups or the minority in the Finnish society, about what they think of their own sexuality as well as remove stereotypical ideologies and misconceptions about Finnish teenagers.

I hope this is favourable considered and the consent will be granted.

Thank you

Cecilia N. Quarshie

Supervisors in Laurea University of Applied Sciences

Sirpa Vattulainen

Tiina Makela

Supervisor in Kuitinmäki Secondary School

Lauri kopisto

Appendix 4

3a. Group discussion

Group A

1. What do you understand to mean sexual life of an individual
 - It means that an individual is having sex with who he/she wants when she/he wants. Basically it means that the individual has started his/her sex life
2. Do all people have sexual rights? What are these rights? what do you think of sexual rights?
 - Yes, but they are not always followed . you cant have sex with someone who doesn't want it. You don't have to have sex if you don't want to. No one can touch you in appropriate ways if you don't want. Sexual rights are good to have and they should be followed

GROUP B

3. What are some of the perceptions you hold or multicultural students hold about the sexual lifestyles of the Finnish teenagers
 - In general Finns are thought as independent and quiet and so social / open people other. Teenagers think that Finns are racists. They think Finns live in North Pole. People who haven't visited finland think we live in forest. They think Finnish girls are blond and have blue eyes
4. What are some of the basis or reasons for these perceptions or thoughts
 - Finland is a small country and nobody knows anything about it and they make things up. Bus drivers don't say hi. Finns don't show off and they don't need / want attention. Finns have a think against Swedes. And they don't like people who come to with the money they draw from KELA.

GROUP C

5. How do you feel about myths or misconceptions other multicultural groups have about Finnish teenagers? How do they react to these wrong perceptions when you interact with them on those lines
 - We know some people wrong about us, but we don't really care about other people's thoughts. But in some occasions we stand up towards wrong thoughts. Other people usually react by thinking we are proud
6. Are these perceptions based on facts, myths, misconceptions and why?
 - Perceptions are a mix of facts, myths and misconceptions and have become bigger than in reality. Example is only a small people of population who actually have a problem with alcohol.

GROUP D

7. Do you think or will want something to be done on the misconceptions other multicultural groups have towards Finnish teenagers. In which ways?

Yes, if there are some misconceptions

8. Can you suggest other strategies or information that can be used to correct these perceptions.

Campaignes, media, visits

GROUP E

9. How do you understand empowerment

Empowerment means to help and give strength to others

10. How or in which ways can one be empowered to live positive lifestyles / make responsible choices and decisions to avoid and eliminate misconceptions

You are supported in your decisions. do things you enjoy

3b. SELF-COMPLETION QUESTIONNAIRE

GIRLS

1. How old are you?

- All were 15 years

2. Describe how you feel about your sexuality?

- I am ok with my sexuality, sometimes i have problems with somethings, but usually i am okay
- Well...I'm umm....balance with myself. And comfortable with myself /confident with me
- I am okay with myself
- I am okay with it. I like myself. I am a nice girl ☺
- I am straight and i am okay with it. As a person i can be quit shy sometimes
- Fine
- I am okay with myself
- I don't really know what to answer but my sexuality is fine and normal. I am comfortable about my sexuality
- I feel confident about it

3. Describe how you express your sexuality?

- I express my own sexuality my own way and i don't let other people get me down
- Well i wear girls clothes and like to wear pretty clothes, do my hair and make- up
- I am a bit shy first but after i get to know the person i talk a lot
- I am quite confident, i have friends. I don't have a boyfriend now but maybe i will soon
- I don't really concentrate on expressing my sexuality, probably by being a girl. At school i am not that confident

- I am myself and i don't care so much with others think
- I express my sexuality very openly
- Normally

4. Describe how the Finnish teenagers express their sexuality? What perceptions do multicultural students or minorities hold about the way you express your sexuality?

- Many people express their sexuality their own way by clothes, actions etc. People think Finnish people are shy to express their sexuality
- Well in the same way, some are just bit more precise. They probably think we are lame and careful. And live in forest and make up things cause they really know nothing about us'
- Boys are shy and girls do not like it. They think we are whores and cocky and easy to get into their stuff
- Finnish people are usually quite shy. Most boys are quiet around girls. They think that Finnish girls are cheap and easy
- I think some girl wear maybe a little too small and tight and open clothes at school. I don't really know but i have heard that other people from other countries that Finnish girls are blond and have blue eyes
- I think that some are just their selves and some think that how others think they should be. I don't really care what they think about me but if they think something really wrong i might say it to then
- In their own way e.g way of dressing
- Shy people don't express their sexuality as much as out going. Boys aren't as open as hoped to be. Some minorities guys see girls very cheap and don't appreciate us
- I don't know with the way they dress. Maybe they think i dress strangely compared to them

5. How do they/do you feel when other multicultural groups have misconception about you and your sexuality

- I don't like it when people think that things are like this and that and there etc
- I don't care
- I don't really care, but it doesn't feel nice
- It is not nice because it isn't true also i think it is waste of time
- Its not nice, but usually i don't care
- I don't really feel anything about it
- I don't care what they think of me
- I don't care if someone else thinks wrong about me. I know the truth
- It is very annoying
- I don't know if they have any

6. How did you/they develop these perceptions?

- I don't know
- It is hard to say. People evaluate people in different ways
- Maybe someone has been like that and they think everyone is like that
- Example : Finnish girls feel flattered around foreign boys because they give extra attention to girls and are not shy. So Finnish girls fall on them easily because we have not get used to the kind of treatment
- I am not sure
- I don't know
- By rumors or some rare occasions happened before
- Maybe from a wide picture about everybody or from some story

7. Do you receive education on your sexuality? Does this education address myths, misconceptions, stereotypes and negative perceptions about the sexual behaviours of the Finnish teenager?

- Yes we do
- Yes. In school, we touched the subject on eight grade but didn't really dig in deep
- Yes we do. Everything basic stuff. Yes i think so
- Yes in school a bit about basic stuff. Not really. It would be nice if would be
- Yes a bit : health education. There are know myths etc
- Yes, we do get education
- Yes we learn about our bodies and changes. No
- Yes

8. In which ways have you experienced any of such negative perceptions? How were you able to approach the issue?

- Somebody has called me a whore like just for fun and its not even fun even if its for 'fun', I just didn't say anything i tried to ignore that and went away
- I have been watched in a bus
- Probably i have. I deal with issues just fine. I played with boys and 2grade which made me seem like a boy girl which i am not.
- Somebody said something stupid to me and i didn't like. Then i say back to them or if i don't mind i don't say anything
- I have been called as a whore without reason. I don't care ore then i say back something
- By rumors or some rare occasions happened before
- I haven't had any negative perceptions. But if i had had i wouldn't care what they say and i would just say to them that i don't care what they say
- Minorities guys have called me a whore or some other things, haven't done. I approached by standing up and telling the truth which is really a waste cause it doesn't change anything
- Some people might stare at me strangely and then i stare back

9. How did you react or how did he/she react?

- They didn't say anything
- They stopped watching
- The other people (girls in my case) started to defend their selves and thats what usually happens
- They went into silence or if there was a bigger group they just laughed
- Then they get quiet because they don't know what to say
- More calling whore etc. Just ends up in fighting or misunderstanding
- They looked away

10. How did you feel?

- I felt bad because i had just went away when they called me that but maybe its better that way
- I feel fine
- Happy with myself for trying to do something about it
- Better if they went into silence
- Good i guess
- Frustrated
- Normal

11. Is there something you or institutions can do about these perceptions?

- They can help by listening good for people that has something to say or share

- I cant say nothing i tell
- I think they should educate people and write about things and if someone has a misconception it should be told to people it is wrong
- I don't know
- No or not much
- There could be some campaigns
- I don't know
- I don't really think so
- Probably not

12. Do you have any concern or additional information?

- No
- Not really
- No i don't have anything
- No i think i know almost everything by now
- No
- No
- No
- Questions could be more straight forward
- No

13. Where do you get power to handle your own sexual problems?

- From my friends usually or nurse
- Free time
- From me and my sister and other relatives + friends and music
- Because i want to make a change there i get the power
- From friends, from the net
- From friends
- It comes from inside me and then from my friends and family
- I don't know from my friends, hobbies
- I don't know, doesn't everyone just have it. And it there are problem help from close persons
- From myself

14. Describe how you get empowered to help other adolescents handle their sexuality in a positive way

- I don't understand
- I don't understand
- If they need help i will help them unless they have too huge problems for me to handle. And because i like my friends and family and want to help them
- Somebody comes to help you when you are in trouble
- I try to be nice to other people and talk to shy people
- By listening and talking and not being mad at him or her almost anything
- I listen to them if they want to talk and help them if they need help.
- Its not easy to help, but I try to help always as good as possible
- If example my friend is an adolescent of course help him/ her

BOYS

1. How old are you?

- All were 15 years old

2. Describe how you feel about your sexuality?

- I feel good about it, i feel that all my thoughts and moods and things are normal
- I am attracted to women i live myself. I like myself like i am. I am very comfortable with myself
- I think that i feel my sexuality in various ways that it is good shape
- I am comfortable and confident with my sexuality

3. Describe how you express your sexuality?

- By dressing , talking and doing things the way i do
- I am a boy and i enjoy female company very much. I dress myself in cool clothes
- I dress in cool clothes

4. What do you think about how the Finnish teenagers express their sexuality? What perceptions do multicultural students or minorities hold about the way you express your sexuality?

- I think Finnish teenagers are a bit shy and not so often. I am not sure
- I think it is normal. They think its normal also
- I don't know

5. How do they/do you feel when other multicultural groups have misconception about you and your sexuality

- Bad i guess, or maybe i don't care i am not sure
- I don't like that and they should find a clear idea
- I think that it is wrong to have misconceptions about your sexuality

6. How did you/they develop these perceptions?

- Well maybe someone has met only one Finnish person and then think every Finnish person is like that person
- Someone has just told a fake rumour from what this things came from
- By thinking what is right and what is not

7. Do you receive education on your sexuality? Does this education address myths, misconceptions, stereotypes and negative perceptions about the sexual behaviours of the Finnish teenager?

- We have a little of it in the health education lessons. Yes it does
- We get education for this at school
- I got education in school. Yes i think that these examples affect teens
- Yes we get education

8. In which ways have you experienced any of such negative perceptions? How were you able to approach the issues?

- I haven't
- Almost everyday to someone else but usually i don't pay attention
- I feel negative perceptions everyday, but it doesn't bother me
- I haven't

9. How did you react or how did he/she react?

- They were happy
- Nothing in particular

10. How did you feel?

- I was feeling fine
- Good

11. Is there something you or institutions can do about these perceptions?

- Show somehow that they are wrong? I think people will always have misconceptions
- No
- Maybe

12. Do you have any other concern or additional information?

- No
- No

13. Where do you get power to handle your own sexual problems?

- From my family and friends , from within myself
- No
- From my personal mind
- From the energy i have

14. Describe how you get empowered to help other adolescents handle their sexuality in a positive way

- School encourages to do that and my parents
- From friends and family and other I know
- I talk to them and help them. If they have any problems
- I have never helped them so i don't know

Appendix 5

PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION TO PUPILS

The issues in the lecture were on empowerment, sexuality, misconceptions, sexually transmitted diseases, rights and volunteers shared experiences of their teenage battles on issues about their sexualities. Appendix 6 gives details of the information used.

First there was an open session where pupils brainstormed and shared own understanding of the following issues :

- Sexuality
- Misconceptions
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Rights

After the discussion there was a power point presenting the following issues to be discussed. Then pupils asked practical examples in some African countries about how teenagers are open to sexuality issues and how they cope with it.

Sexuality: Sexuality is a complex aspect of our personality and self. Our sexuality is defined by sexual thoughts, desires and longings, erotic fantasies, turn-ons and experiences. In many ways sexuality is the force that empowers us to express and display strong, emotional feelings for another person and is a natural stimulus for the procreation of our species. The 'thing' that attracts one person to another may not always be sexual - it could be sense of humor, personality, likeability, compatibility or intelligence.

Empowerment : Refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities. Empowerment is the act of giving power and authority to a person to perform his designated tasks in whatever way he wants, and having the power in decision-making. Simple to say, a person is allowed to complete a task scope with minimal supervision or external force.

Myth: A traditional story about heroes or supernatural beings , often attempting to explain the origins of natural phenomena or aspects of human behaviour.

Misconception: A mistaken idea or view resulting from a misunderstanding of something

Stereotype : An oversimplified standardized image of a person or group

Perception: The process of using the senses to acquire information about the surrounding environment or situation

Approach: To speak to somebody with a view of asking for something